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Anthony I. Cognato
Michigan State University

Mark F. O'Brien
University of Michigan

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The Woodlouse Hunter Occurs in Michigan (Araneae: Dysderidae: *Dysdera crocata* C.L. Koch 1838)

Anthony I. Cognato¹ and Mark F. O'Brien²

Abstract

We document the occurrence of the spider, *Dysdera crocata* C.L. Koch, in Michigan. Specimens have been collected from Bay, Branch, Ingham, Kent, Livingston, Macomb, Montcalm, Muskegon, Oakland, Washtenaw and Wayne Counties between 1975-2013.

Dysdera crocata C.L. Koch (Araneae: Dysderidae) is a cosmopolitan spider with European origins and it is found in mesic habitats often associated with its prey, terrestrial isopods (Cooke 1965). Apparently spread by anthropogenic means, *D. crocata* often seems to be associated with suburban and urban habitats. A detailed study of this spider's mating behavior in New Zealand exemplifies a species that has been associated with anthropogenic transport and possible synanthropic ecology (Jackson and Pollard 1982). The public often reports this spider to insect diagnosticians given its frequent occurrence in houses and its menacing appearance (H. Russell, personal communication). Its long sickle-shaped fangs are little cause for alarm because the bite of *D. crocata* is only mildly irritating and at worst, it causes a sharp pain, which dissipates within minutes (Vetter and Isbister 2006). Six eyes, four lung slits, dark cephalothorax and cream-colored abdomen (Fig. 1) also identify this species (Kaston 1978).

This spider occurs in many U.S. states from Maine to California (Kaston 1978). Regional reviews have documented its occurrence in Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, but not Michigan (Snider 1991, Sierwald et al. 2005). Sierwald et al. suggested the likely occurrence of the species in Michigan. We document that *D. crocata* has occurred in Michigan for at least 40 years, based on specimens found in the A.J. Cook Arthropod Research Collection, Michigan State University and The University of Michigan Museum of Zoology (listed below). In addition, MSU Diagnostic Services identified several specimens from Bay, Branch, Ingham, Kent, Livingston, Macomb, Montcalm, Muskegon, Oakland Counties between 2008-2013; however, these specimens were not vouchered (H. Russell, personal communication).

Michigan records of vouchered specimens include: **Ingham Co.**, East Lansing, 821 Sunset Ln., under loose bark of dead ash, 12 January 2013, A.I. Cognato coll. & det.; **Livingston Co.**, Cooked Lake, Pinckney State Recreational Area, ex. leaf litter, 22 July 2011, S. Nicols & T. Somota coll., G.L. Parsons det.; **Washtenaw Co.**, Ann Arbor, 5 November 1975 (in house), A. Jaslow coll. (det HD Cameron 1977); 9 May 1976, (det HD Cameron 1976); 1 Dec. 1976, in house, S. Jackson coll. (det HD Cameron 1977); 12 May 1983, from campus bldg., S. Campbell coll. (det M.F. O'Brien, 1983); 7 September 1983, J. Hinshaw coll. (det M.F. O'Brien 1983); Ann Arbor, April 1996, in house. (det M.F. O'Brien); April 1996, in house, (det M.F. O'Brien); August 2010 (from a household).; **Wayne**

¹ Department of Entomology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824.

²Insect Division, Museum of Zoology, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1079.

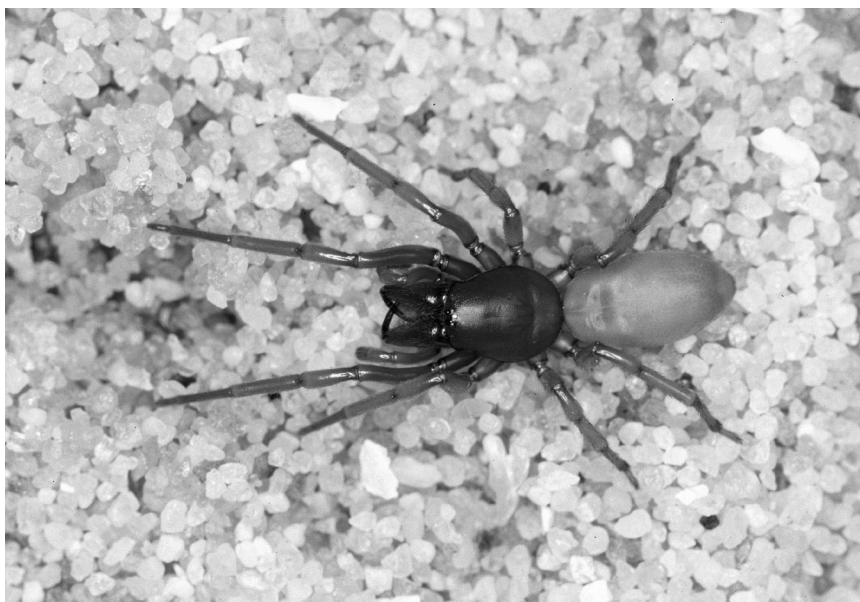


Figure 1. The woodlouse hunter, *Dysdera crocata*. Photograph of specimen in 2003 from Ann Arbor by M. F. O'Brien.

Co., Dearborn, 42.313°N x 83.197°W, 22 April 2007, J.A. Craves (photo voucher record <http://www.discoverlife.org/mp/20l?id=BBB953> and <http://www.flickr.com/photos/craves/469052496/>).

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